

**Part 3 - Qualifications for Promotions**

- (1) awaiting final action on the recommended findings of a Medical Review Board;
  - (2) delinquent in obtaining required medical examinations;
  - (3) delinquent in completion or unable to complete successfully the Physical Readiness Testing requirement; and
  - (4) fit for shore duty.
- D. Promotion of a NOAA Corps officer in any of the situations listed in NCD 04302C, except NCD 04302C (4) and (5), shall be suspended until such time as physical fitness is determined. Promotion of a NOAA Corps officer in the situation in NCD 04304C (4) and (5) shall be delayed. If found not physically qualified, the NOAA Corps officer shall be separated or retired, as applicable, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 61 of Title 10, U.S. Code.

**04303 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

- A. Professional qualifications refer to a NOAA Corps officer's cumulative record of performance including, but not limited to, those factors evaluated in fitness reports (See NCD Chapter 4, Part 4). Additional professional qualification requirements for promotion to particular grades are prescribed below:
- (1) Promotion to lieutenant (junior grade)
    - (a) To begin developing supervisory and management competencies, satisfactory completion of a minimum of 3.0 CEU (Continuing Education Unit) of introductory supervision training is required.
    - (b) NOAA Corps officers in the grade of ensign must complete course requirements by their date of nomination, or by 18 months, which ever comes first.

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- (2) Promotion to lieutenant
  - (a) To continue developing supervisory and management competencies, satisfactory completion of a 2.4 CEU of introductory financial management training and 2.4 CEU of personnel management skills training is required.
  - (b) Acquisition or upgrade of a professional license, including Engineer in Training, may be substituted for a required course for promotion to lieutenant. Acquisition or upgrade of a professional license before commissioning is not creditable. The Director, CPC, will determine creditable licenses.
  - (c) NOAA Corps officers in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) must complete all course requirements by their date of nomination.
  - (d) In addition to the satisfactory completion of all course requirements referred to in NCD 04303A(2)(a), each officer shall, not later than the date considered for promotion, possess a letter of qualification as a NOAA Officer of the Deck (OOD) Underway or a letter of qualification as a NOAA Aviator (Pilot or Navigator) in a particular aircraft type, and have performed duties as a qualified NOAA OOD or NOAA Aviator for a minimum of three (3) months.
  - (e) The Director has final authority on courses that qualify a NOAA Corps officer for promotion to lieutenant.
- (3) When considered justified, a NOAA Corps officer granted positive adjustment on the lineal list may be excused from the requirement for completing courses for promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) and/or lieutenant by the Director, CPC. The Director, CPC, shall notify the NOAA Corps officer of such determination and make such notification a part of the NOAA Corps officer's Officer Personnel File.

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- (4) Promotion to lieutenant commander
  - (a) A NOAA Corps officer must have demonstrated the ability or potential to manage people and resources in order to be professionally qualified for promotion to lieutenant commander. In addition to the courses prescribed in sections NCD 04303A(1) and 04303A(2), and as a complement to on-the-job experience gained through involvement in NOAA programs, satisfactory completion of 15 CEU or equivalent short-course hours of supervisory/management-type training is required.
  - (b) Any NOAA Corps officer in the grade of lieutenant who fails to complete course requirements and who has not been granted an extension by the Director, CPC, by the time the OPB meets to make selection from the promotion zone, shall be omitted from the zone and considered as having failed to be selected for promotion. A NOAA Corps officer below the promotion zone, who has not completed course requirements, will not be considered for deep selection.
- (5) Courses selected by the NOAA Corps officer to fulfill the requirements of NCD 04303A(1), 04303A(2), and 04303A(4) should be from the approved list contained in Appendix 4.1, to the maximum extent feasible. Classroom or self-study courses not included in Appendix 4.1 shall be approved for promotion purposes by the Director, CPC, upon prior written request, and confirmation of courses acceptability. Funding and scheduling for approved off-site classroom courses should be arranged through the organization to which the NOAA Corps officer is assigned. Funding for approved self-study courses in supervisory/management type training for promotion purposes may be arranged through the Director, CPC.
- (6) For promotion to commander and captain four broad criteria will be evaluated for selection: leadership ability, management ability, professional development, and breadth of experience. These criteria are in addition to and supportive of the predominant criteria of performance as determined through the NOAA Corps officer's fitness reports and documented achievements.
  - (a) Leadership ability is marked by those traits of an individual that inspire people, are essential in leading a program or project successfully, and produce positive results. Generally, these characteristics correlate closely with job performance.

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- (b) Management ability is gained largely through service in a position of authority over program resources (personnel and/or funding) that develops decision-making skills. Examples of typical billets that satisfy this requirement are:
  - 1. Commanding or Executive Officer - Ship
  - 2. Aircraft Commander
  - 3. Chief - Group, Branch or Division
  - 4. Director - Office, Facility or Laboratory
  - 5. Staff Officer to Senior Manager
  - 6. Program/Project Manager - Major Activity
- (c) Professional development is a continuing process and is manifested through various types of training programs, either part-time or full-time, as well as active participation within a professional discipline. Each NOAA Corps officer must assess further needs for training in areas of weakness and then seek to obtain such training so as to remain professionally and competitively strong within his/her officer peer group.
- (d) Breadth of experience is important for senior NOAA Corps officers expected to work with interdisciplinary matters and across organizational lines. However, NOAA Corps officers should not become so broadly based that they lose professional credibility. Rather, NOAA Corps officers should strive to gain a basic knowledge of NOAA's overall activities, structure and mission and keep informed about significant events affecting NOAA. Some examples of assignments that provide breadth of experience are:
  - 1. Policy/program billets with Line Organizations
  - 2. Offices within NOAA Headquarters
  - 3. Management and Budget Staff
  - 4. International or Interagency Liaison

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- (e) NOAA Corps officers approaching the promotion zone to captain should make an effort to enroll in a residential executive training programs such as the courses offered at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management=s Federal Executive Institute and Management Development Centers.
- (7) Criteria for promotion to flag grade are essentially the same as indicated in NCD 04303A(6), in addition to personal and professional attributes applicable to the specific flag billet under consideration.

**04304 COMPLETION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Qualified NOAA Corps officers may be selected for or if selected, promoted to, at any time on or after completing the minimum time-in-grade requirements for promotion. Every NOAA Corps officer shall complete course requirements by the date of eligibility for promotion (date of rank plus minimum time in grade). Ensigns must complete course work as noted in NCD 04303A(1).
- B. It is the responsibility of the NOAA Corps officer to furnish documentation of final course completion to the Director, CPC, in a timely manner.
- C. The nomination of a NOAA Corps officer who has been granted additional time to complete course requirements will be suspended for the additional time allowed. Upon completion of the course requirements within the time allowed, the officer will be nominated for the higher grade. Depending on the length of the suspension the OPB may make a recommendation for a lineal list adjustment.
- D. NOAA Corps officers have ample time to complete course requirements prescribed herein. Requests for additional time will be approved by the Director, CPC, only in the event of extreme circumstances preventing the NOAA Corps officer from completing these requirements. Recent workload, misinterpretation, or ignorance of these directives are not valid reasons for granting additional time.
- E. NOAA Corps officers are exempt from requirements issued subsequent to the date on which they were found to have met the previous course requirements.

**APPROVED MANAGEMENT COURSES FOR PROMOTION QUALIFICATION**

A. **GENERAL:** Courses listed below may be taken without prior approval. Courses other than those listed below require prior approval from the Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC). Use the course titles below as a guide for the type of courses that will be approved as substitutes. Requests for approval of courses, including college-level courses, must include the course name, number of credit hours, and a brief course description. For college-level courses, five semester hours or seven quarter hours are considered to be equivalent to 15.0 Continuing Education Units (CEU). This equates to 3.0 CEU for each semester credit and 2.1 CEU for each quarter credit. Ten general short-course hours are equal to 1.0 CEU. Any CEU acquired in excess for promotion to the next grade will be counted towards the requirement for the following grade. Credit will not be given for courses of less than 8 hours or 0.6 CEU.

B. **PRE-APPROVED COURSES FUNDED BY CPC:** The following self-study correspondence courses, available through the USDA Graduate School, are pre-approved. The CPC Training Coordinator will procure these courses upon request.

1. For promotion to lieutenant (junior grade):

Introduction to Supervision SUPV3101N, 3.0 CEU.

2. For promotion to lieutenant:

Introduction to Federal Budgeting, BUDG7001N, 2.4 CEU and Assertive Supervision, SUPV7002N, 2.4 CEU (other pre-approved supervisory courses may be substituted).

3. For promotion to lieutenant commander:

Basic Project Management, PROJ7001N, 2.4 CEU,  
Basic Labor Relations, LABR7051N, 4.0 CEU,  
EEO—Its Place in the Federal Government, EEOP7051N, 1.6 CEU,  
Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, EEOP7003N, 1.6 CEU,  
Effective Work Delegation, SUPV7056N, 2.4 CEU,  
Solving Performance and Conduct Problems, LABR 7052N, 2.4 CEU,  
Improving Employee Performance, SUPV7007N, 2.4 CEU,  
Time Management for Supervisors, SUPV7051N, 2.4 CEU,

Information on USDA correspondence courses may be obtained by visiting their website at [www.grad.usda.gov](http://www.grad.usda.gov).